

Abstract

An Active User Registry system comprises a database which is integrated with the POTS network and a packet network (such as the Internet, or a corporate intranet).

- 5 Integrating AUR with the POTS network and a packet network exploits the outstanding strengths of both of its constituents, such as the low-latency, high reliability, moderate fidelity real-time voice telephony provided by the POTS network, and the point-and-click
- 10 access to distributed databases with excellent search capabilities provided by a packet network, such as the Internet (including those made available using browser technology in conjunction with the World Wide Web). The AUR database contains a dynamic data structure (such as
- 15 a linked list or a hashed table) of all the ways in which one or more users can be reached via some type of communication network (e.g., through the POTS network or a packet network, or both). A key feature of the AUR is the ability to broker between a subscriber's request for
- 20 communications contact information corresponding to a user and the user's preferences of being reached by various communications alternatives. Other features may be included with the AUR, including an AUR cache which provides subscribers with rapid-access entry points into
- 25 the AUR, or automatic updating of user contact information. Further, the capability of learning the user's preferences is included as an additional feature and is also included as a feature in an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

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